



Show-Me Yards & Neighborhoods



Show-Me Yards & Neighborhoods – Yard Certification Checklist

Does your yard measure up?

Show-Me Yards & Neighborhoods (SMY&N) honors model landscapes as certified Show-Me Friendly Yards and provides a Show-Me Yard sign to those homeowners.

To be certified as a Show-Me Yard, your landscape must:
Collect at least 36 inches on this Yardstick Checklist
Receive full points for practices marked with 2 asterisks**
Receive partial credit for practices marked with 1 asterisk*
Comply with all existing codes and laws

Mowing for a Healthier Environment

- Mow lawns high to encourage a deeper, more drought and pest tolerant root system.** 2"
- Sharpen mower blades monthly so grass blades heal and recover. 1"
- Lawn mower engine serviced twice annually to reduce emissions contributing to air pollution.* 2"
- Use an electric lawn mower instead of one powered by gasoline. 4"

Water Efficiently

- Irrigate lawn and landscape only when they wilt. Apply < 3/4 inches of water per application. 3"
- For a yard that uses an irrigation system (in-ground or hose-end sprinklers):*
- Calibrate irrigation/sprinkler system to apply < 3/4 inches of water.** 3"
- Put a rain gauge in your yard to track irrigation amounts.** 2"
- Install a rain shut-off device for in-ground irrigation systems.** 2"
- Make sure irrigation system waters lawn areas separately from plant beds. 2"
- Use drip or micro-irrigation in plant and flower beds. 2"
- For a yard that does not use an irrigation system:*
- Design and maintain a landscape that exists predominantly on rainfall once plants are established. 6"

Mulch

- Maintain a 2 – 3" layer of organic mulch over tree roots, shrubs and plant beds, leaving a 2-inch space between the plant base and the mulch.* 2"
- Create self-mulching areas under trees where leaves can remain as they fall. 1"
- Use by-product mulches or recycled mulches. 1"
- Replenish mulch once or twice a year to maintain 2-3" depth. 1"

Recycle

- Whenever possible, recycle grass clippings by allowing them to remain on the lawn. 2"
- Use leaves and pine needles found in your yard as mulch. 2"
- Create and maintain a compost pile with yard clippings, leaves, kitchen scraps, etc. 3"

Wildlife

- Plant vines, shrubs, and trees that provide cover, nesting areas or food sources for birds, butterflies and other wildlife. 3"
- Provide a water source, such as a bird bath or a small pond for wildlife. 1"
- Provide wildlife shelters such as a bat house, bird house, brush pile, etc. 1"
- Identify five kinds of wildlife (insects, reptile, birds, etc.) that live in your yard. 2"

Yard Pests

- Treat only affected plants or lawn areas with pesticide applications. Avoid indiscriminate spraying.** 3"
- Check your landscape every 1 – 2 weeks for signs of problems. 2"
- Learn to identify 5 beneficial insects that provide natural control of harmful pests. 2"
- Use environmentally friendly pesticides such as horticultural oils and insecticidal soaps. 2"
- Use non-chemical approaches to pest controls, such as pruning off affected areas, hand removing insects, etc., whenever possible. 3"

Right Plant – Right Place

- Ensure that your landscape does not contain plants identified by legal code as invasive exotics such as kudzu, privet, and wintercreeper.**
- Replace problem-prone plants with low maintenance native or non-native species. 2"
- Group plants according to their water and maintenance needs. 2"
- Determine how much grass you need for children, pets, and recreation. Replace the rest with low maintenance ground covers, shrubs, mulch, or other porous surfaces. 3"
- Use trees and shrubs to shade southern and western walls of home and air conditioner compressor. 1"
- Use deciduous trees on southern exposures to allow the sun to passively heat your home in winter. 1"
- Reduce yard waste by choosing plants that will not require frequent pruning at maturity. 1"
- Preserve native plants when building on a new site. Maintain a protective "do not disturb" barrier under the dripline of trees. 3"

Fertilizing

- Fertilize as needed to maintain quality of lawns and landscape plants.* 2"
- Use natural organic or other slow release fertilizers.* 2"
- Use iron instead of nitrogen to make your lawn green during the summer. 1"

Stormwater Runoff

- Direct downspouts and gutters to drain onto the lawn, plant beds, or containment areas.* 1"
- Plant groundcovers or use mulch on thinly vegetated areas to decrease erosion.* 2"
- Use mulch, bricks, flagstones, gravel, or other porous surfaces on walkways, patios or drives. 1"
- Collect and use rainwater to irrigate plants. 2"
- Create swales or terracing to catch and filter stormwater. 3"
- Pick up after pets to reduce bacterial and nutrient pollution in stormdrain systems. 2"
- Clean up oil spills and leaks using cat litter on driveways. 2"
- Sweep grass clippings, fertilizer, and soil from driveway onto lawn. Remove trash from street gutters. 2"

On the Waterfront

- Remove invasive exotic aquatic plants by cutting, pulling or raking. Remove dead plant material from water after using herbicides to reduce pollution. 2"
- Establish a border of low maintenance plants between your lawn and the waterline to absorb nutrients and to provide wildlife habitat.** 2"
- Establish a 10 – 30 foot "no fertilizer" zone along the waterline.* 2"
- Where feasible, plant native vegetation in the zone along the waterfront. 4"

TOTAL INCHES

Please return to:
Choose Environmental Excellence
c/o Barbara Lucks
840 Boonville Avenue
Springfield, MO 65802

Name _____

Address _____

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